



Bruce Charles Wiinamaki

July 25, 1968 - October 12, 2025

Bruce Wiinamaki, age 57, of Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, passed away unexpectedly due to cardiac arrest on October 12, 2025, doing what he loved: getting ready to go out on his boat at the Hessel marina. A beloved husband, father, stepfather, son, brother, and friend, Bruce was known for his patient nature, kind heart, and unwavering loyalty, support, and dependability to those he loved.

Bruce married the love of his life, Kelli, on December 28, 2022. Their story began decades earlier, as close friends in high school, surrounded by a large group of mutual friends. Life led them down separate paths, but fate had other plans. They reconnected at concert in 2016, where Bruce joked, "So, when are we getting married?". What began as a lighthearted moment quickly turned into something much deeper. Both knew, almost instantly, that they had found their person. It didn't take Bruce long to move back to Sault Ste. Marie to start their life together. From boating and traveling the country to road trips visiting their children, attending concerts and Detroit sporting events, and dreaming about the future, they built a life full of love, laughter, and unwavering support. Bruce often said he had always loved Kelli, and anyone who saw them together knew it was true. Since his passing, Kelli has been comforted by many who've shared how deeply Bruce adored her and how these past nine years were the happiest of his life, as they were hers. Their story is a testament that sometimes love takes the long way home. It may wait

quietly in the background for years, but when it returns, it is stronger, deeper, and exactly where it was always meant to be. Bruce and Kelli had beautiful plans for their future, dreams that were only just beginning to take shape. Together, they believed they could conquer anything. With their shared work ethic and devotion, they trusted their goals would carry them well into the golden years.

Bruce was deeply dedicated to his family, providing constant love, patience, and guidance. He was incredibly proud of his children and the adults they've become, always celebrating their accomplishments with quiet pride and a full heart. He offered them strength and stability and enjoyed their frequent calls and texts. As a stepfather, he stepped fully into the role without hesitation, especially in his bond with his youngest stepson, Kaden, who has Down's Syndrome and Autism. He loved visiting with his parents, sister Marcia, brother Dave and sister-in-law Melody and their children. He always wished they lived closer so he could see them more often. Bruce was also adored by the Fenlon Family, quickly becoming like a brother to Kelli's siblings and in-laws. He shared a special relationship with his father-in-law, Paul, who admired his craftsmanship and enjoyed coming to see Bruce's progress on their dream home. Paul was deeply appreciative of the love and care he had for his daughter and grandsons.

A true Yooper and outdoorsman, Bruce found peace and happiness living on the St. Mary's River, where he loved watching freighters pass by, building a bonfire, and relaxing in the hot tub. Bruce had a passion for boating that he shared with Kelli, their children, and many friends. He loved cruising the St. Mary's River on their pontoon and especially the Les Cheneaux Islands aboard the Rum Runner, a 1964 Chris Craft Constellation, he proudly restored with Kelli and Andrew, a labor of love that brought joy, accomplishment, and countless memories. Winters brought the thrill of snowmobiling throughout the UP with his lifelong buddies, watching the I-500, and downhill skiing with his

children, who he taught to ski at a young age.

Bruce was proud of his Finnish ancestry and was a devoted Christian. He grew up attending Calvary Baptist Church and later converted to Catholicism. He loved sharing memories of his childhood: going to Awana, attending Camp Gitche Gumee Bible Camp, visiting family in the Keweenaw Peninsula, and spending time at their cabin on McNearney Lake.

Bruce graduated from Sault Area High School in 1986 and earned an Associate Degree in Construction Management from Lake Superior State University in 1988. A dedicated and hard worker from a young age, he started as a paperboy and held various jobs through high school before eventually owning his own carpentry businesses in Gaylord, Oxford, and Sault Ste. Marie. After returning to the Sault in 2016, he worked as a subcontractor for Arbic Construction, known for his meticulous and skilled finish carpentry. He could build, fix, or create anything. Whether working on home projects or bringing one of Kelli's Pinterest vision into reality, he approached every task with patience and pride. He was always willing to lend a hand, and he never expected anything in return.

Bruce had a gift for making people feel welcome and valued. He was a genuine, loyal friend, with many lifelong friendships, especially Roger, Pat and Mark who are like family. He enjoyed daily walks with his loyal dog, Guinness, who rarely left his side, to visit with the "Riverside Crew", a close-knit group of neighbors and friends who regularly gather to share stories, drinks, and banter. This group has been a tremendous support to Kelli and the family during this difficult time. Bruce's presence brought comfort to so many, and his absence leaves a deep void on the lives of those who knew and loved him.

He is survived by his wife, Kelli (Fenlon); children, Abigail Wiinamaki and

Andrew (fiancé, Reece) Wiinamaki, and Alyssa Atkins; grandson, Oliver; stepsons, Keegan and Kaden Hill; parents, Ray and LaVonne Wiinamaki; siblings, Marcia and Dave (Melody) Wiinamaki; parent in-laws, Paul and Nancy Fenlon; sister in-law, Kristen (Matthew) Glaz; brother in-law, Jeffrey (Kristen) Fenlon; ex-wife, Amy (fiancé, Brian) Zecchin; many extended family members, and countless friends.

Bruce was preceded in death by his paternal grandparents, Raymond and Ester Wiinamaki; maternal grandparents, Fred and Pearl Galer; paternal Aunt, Betty Kalliainen; and maternal Aunt, Verna Watson.

Public visitation will be held on Saturday, October 18, 2025, from 3:00 PM – 5:00 PM at Family Life Funeral Homes, 4951 S. M-129, Sault Ste. Marie, MI, with a Memorial Service beginning at 5:00 PM. A celebration of Bruce's life will follow immediately at the American Legion at 3 Legion Drive, Sault Ste. Marie, MI.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Bruce Wiinamaki Memorial Fund at Central Savings Bank, 511 Bingham Avenue, Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan 49783

Family Life Funeral Homes – Sault Ste. Marie assisted the family with arrangements. Condolences may be left to the family at www.familylifefh.com.

Previous Events

Visitation

OCT **18**. 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM (ET)

Family Life Funeral Homes - Sault Ste. Marie
4951 S. M-129
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
(906) 632-4951
flfh@familylifefh.com
<https://www.familylifefuneralhomes.com/>

Funeral Service

OCT **18**. 5:00 PM - 6:00 PM (ET)

Family Life Funeral Homes - Sault Ste. Marie
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Tribute Wall



“ *Small Garden Dish was purchased for the family of Bruce Charles Wiinamaki.*



October 16, 2025 at 10:28 AM



“ *From The Parson's Nose Team purchased the Small Garden Dish for the family of Bruce Charles Wiinamaki.*



From The Parson's Nose Team - October 16, 2025 at 09:11 AM



“ *I'm so very sorry for your loss, Kelli. I never met your husband, but felt I knew him just a bit from all your Facebook posts and pictures. I remember thinking that you two just seemed to fit together perfectly and loved following the progress on your home and especially your wedding pics. I was unaware of the long history you shared. I've been thinking of you since I heard the news. My deepest condolences to you, your boys, and mom and dad on the loss of your Bruce.*

Cyndi Clark - October 16, 2025 at 07:57 AM

TM

Kelli, Duane and I are just devastated hearing about your beautiful hubbys passing! We loved that you knew each other even in high school! A beautiful reunion and many recent years together. We are so sorry for your loss. Praying for the Lord to wrap his arms around you all, and hold tight as He walks beside you in your grief. Our love, Duane & Terri Martin

Terri Martin - October 18, 2025 at 02:19 PM

CJ

Sorry Kelli to hear of this. He was a kind nice person. Caroline Jennings. Thought are with you. I know much Kade loved him.

Caroline Jennings - October 20, 2025 at 09:55 PM

KW

Thank you for all the kind words and prayers!

Kelli Wiinamaki - October 23, 2025 at 08:54 PM

TF

“ *The Connolly Family planted a grove of 5 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Bruce Charles Wiinamaki.*

The Connolly Family - October 15, 2025 at 06:36 PM

LS

“ *My husband and I are so sorry for your loss. Bruce did the finish carpentry on our home a couple of years ago. He did a wonderful job and he was kind and easy to work with. We knew we could count on him to help us with any concern we had. We could show him a picture or describe what we wanted and he would make it happen. One special memory is the movable step he made for our sauna because he thought it would be helpful to me as I'm very short. His kindness and thoughtfulness will always be remembered. Prayers for peace and comfort for your family.*

Lori Smith - October 15, 2025 at 05:57 PM

MW

We remember him in the Harwood Subdivision as our paper boy. Our prayers to Kelly and his family.

Marcia & Sam White - October 15, 2025 at 09:34 PM

LM

I grew up with Bruce and family on Radar Road. Best memories playing kickball in their front yard with all the neighborhood kids. Such a nice family. Thoughts and prayers go out to all of you.

Lori Matheson - October 16, 2025 at 09:01 AM

KW

Thank you so much for all the kind words and prayers!

Kelli Wiinamaki - October 23, 2025 at 08:50 PM